

REMARKS

This Reply to Office Action is responsive to the Office Action mailed on June 22, 2004. Claims 1-19 are pending in the present Application. Applicant has canceled claims 1-6 and 13-19, amended claims 7 and 8, and added claims 20-24. Accordingly, claims 7-12 and 20-24 are now at issue.

With this Reply, Applicant submits a Petition for a Three-Month Extension of Time, making Applicant's Reply due on or before December 22, 2004. Accordingly, Applicant's Reply is timely filed.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5-9, 11-16, 18 and 19 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Conlon, et al.* (U.S. 4,366,602) in view of *O'Keefe* (U.S. 5,165,146) and *Chen* (U.S. 6,594,869). The Examiner also rejected claims 4, 10 and 17 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Conlon* in view of *O'Keefe* and *Chen*, and further in view of *Lems, et al.* (U.S. 4,077,313). However, Applicant submits that claims 7-12 and 20-24, as amended, are patentable over *Conlon, O'Keefe, Chen* and *Lems*, taken alone or in combination.

Independent claim 7, as amended, recites ". . . an elongate metallic strap having . . . a return loop adjacent the first end . . . wherein the first end of the strap comprises at least one rib disposed along the return loop." As discussed in specification paragraph [0030], and as best seen in FIG. 8, the strap 28 has a plurality of stiffening ribs 38 near the first end 26 in the rear of the strap 28 at the return loop. The stiffening ribs provide additional strength to the return loop, thus increasing the load at which the return loop will unfold. As a result, cable tie 22 has increased tensile strength. Applicant submits that

neither *Conlon*, *O'Keefe*, *Chen*, nor *Lems*, taken alone or in combination, disclose, teach or suggest the first end of a strap having at least one rib disposed along a return loop.

In the Office Action, the Examiner contends that *Chen* teaches the use of a clamp comprising a strap provided with reinforcing ribs 24 formed adjacent the head of the clamp. However, as discussed in column 2, lines 62-67, *Chen* discloses two reinforcing ribs 24 perpendicularly extended along two sides of the smoothly arched extension bearing flange 23 and adapted to guide movement of the second lug 22 with the second end of the binding strap 20 on the extension bearing flange 23 towards the first lug 21. Although, as disclosed in column 3, lines 12-16, the reinforcing ribs 24 reinforce the structural strength of the binding strap 20, the reinforcing ribs primarily serve to guide the second lug 22 towards the first lug 21 smoothly during installation of the tube clamp. Moreover, *Chen* does not disclose, teach or suggest a strap having a return loop adjacent a first end thereof, with the first end including at least one rib disposed along the return loop. Thus, because *Chen* only discloses a tube clamp and does not disclose a cable tie having a strap and a locking head secured to the strap, it would not have been obvious to modify *Chen* to provide a strap having a first end including at least one rib disposed along a return loop. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 7 is patentable over the cited prior art.

Claim 8 has been amended to conform with amended claim 7. Claims 8-12 are asserted to be allowable based on their dependency from allowable claim 7.

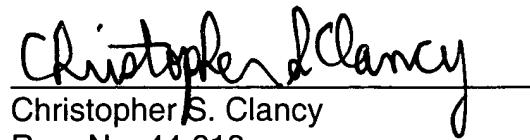
New dependent claims 20-24 include features of the locking head from canceled claims 1, 2, 13 and 14. Specifically, claims 20-24 describe the locking head as having at least one indentation 36 on a first side thereof and at least one indentation 36 on a second

side thereof, as shown in FIG. 8. Claims 20-24 are asserted to be allowable based on their dependency from allowable claim 7.

In view of the above, Applicant submits that claims 7-12 and 20-24 are allowable and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: December 15, 2004



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